

Executive Summary

Evaluation of the prevention and influence work of the ICRC Regional Delegation in Lima (Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru)

Period 2018-2022

Introduction

Recent efforts, spanning various activities carried out by the Regional Delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Lima, (hereafter the Lima RD) have focused on promoting (the concepts of/ principles of) prevention and influence among relevant actors. Such efforts were guided by the objective of fostering an environment that supports adherence to and respect for International Humanitarian Law (IHL), International Human Rights Law (IHRL) and the use of force by duty bearers concerned. The work of prevention and influence is integrated into all the Delegation's actions and has a significant impact on ensuring humanitarian access and protection to the groups that are particularly affected by the humanitarian consequences of violence.

As part of the prevention and influence work of the ICRC Regional Delegation in Peru, a set of actions has led to the design and enactment of new legal instruments, the institutional design of areas with specific competencies, and various training programs have been carried out for officials from different areas of the State (Armed Forces, Security Forces, Public Defenders and Prosecutors' Offices), universities, civil society groups and networks. These actions occurred in a rapidly changing and highly complex political, economic, social, and security context that posed new challenges for the ICRC's work.

In 2008, the ICRC adopted its Prevention Policy, which clarifies this component of its work and its relationship with protection, assistance, and cooperation. It states that "the ICRC seeks to prevent human suffering by fostering an environment conducive to (1) respect for the life and dignity of persons affected by armed conflict and other situations of violence; and (2) respect for the ICRC's work. This approach entails taking action to prevent suffering by influencing those who can determine – directly or indirectly – the fate of people affected and generally implies a medium- or long-term perspective. It encompasses efforts to communicate, develop, clarify, and promote the implementation of international humanitarian law and other relevant bodies of law, as well as efforts to facilitate acceptance of the ICRC's work".

In this context, the "Evaluation of the prevention and influencing work of the Regional Delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Lima (Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru) 2018-2022" aimed to assess, based on evidence, the achievements of the ICRC's prevention and influencing work in the region, analyzing its contribution to the Protection Outcomes (PO) established by the delegation, and formulating recommendations for future work.

Context

During the analyzed period, political and social polarization dynamics worsened in each country involved and, more broadly, in the Latin American context. The protests and mobilizations of broad social sectors aimed at channeling their demands to public institutions. In some cases, the excessive use of force has resulted in injuries and the loss of human lives, as well as caused irregularities in the legitimate use of force by security forces. The resolution of social and political demands began to take a violent turn and, in many cases, was accompanied by serious human rights violations. The three countries have suffered political-institutional and social crises, with changes in government which have shifted priorities and consequently affected the continuity of some public policies on justice and human rights.

The Venezuelan crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic introduced additional factors of complexity. Throughout 2018-2022 and to this day, the Venezuelan crisis continues to be the source of significant humanitarian consequences impacting the entire region. Observed in the provision of assistance and protection, such humanitarian consequences manifest in the arrival of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers in the three countries – and to a greater extent in Ecuador and Peru – and constitute a challenge to the public response, namely the inclusion of newly-arrived persons in employment and social protection policies. The large-scale arrival of migrant populations, especially in Ecuador and Peru, offers a scenario that adds to the contexts of armed violence, humanitarian crises, disasters, and pre-existing socio-political instability and will affect both the different host communities and the dynamics of migration and displacement itself.

Thus, it is observed how the effects of the Venezuelan crisis, COVID-19, the persistence of the armed conflict in some parts of Colombian territory, and regional dynamics affect the fulfillment of people's rights in mobility contexts. The exposure to risks of being victims of different forms of violence, labor exploitation, gender-based violence and other forms of violence or abuse, human trafficking, and smuggling increased. Similarly augmented is the exposure of people in the context of mobility to xenophobia and discrimination in host communities, affecting their options for moving forward.

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly affected economic activity by boosting the informal economy and labour precariousness in the three countries, thereby highlighting the limitations of social protection policies in the face of imposed limitations on the movement of people, goods, and services.

The ICRC prevention and influence work

The prevention work of the ICRC has created an enabling environment, contributing to respect for IHL and law enforcement standards under IHRL. The aim of this prevention work is to contribute to the protection of affected persons and facilitate the ICRC's access to them. The Delegation and all teams are collectively working towards common objectives and Operational Priorities (OPs) to achieve specific Protection Outcomes (POs), either directly or indirectly. The priorities established in the annual planning documents or PfR have evolved, depending on the various situation analyses promoted by the Delegation every year in the context of the respective operational planning. Some priorities have remained unchanged (the region of the valley of the rivers Apurímac, Ene and Mantaro -VRAEM-, missing persons, detainees, other situations of violence -OSV), while others (Colombian- Ecuadorian border and migration) have changed. Nowadays, even if reduced, the ICRC still has some actions to address the situations of migrants, and migration is also considered a topic in OP 4 (Humanitarian consequences of OSV and migration) in PfR 2023 and 2024.

In others, such as increasing the influence and acceptance of the ICRC, it has been expanded in the PfR 2023 with OP 6, which underscores the relevance attributed to the strengthening of National Red Cross Societies. In the subsequent phases of the process, the various planning instruments put in place by the Delegation will be analyzed in depth to provide an accurate assessment of this evolution.

Objectives

The evaluation was conducted to contribute to accountability and inform decision-making, using a summative and formative approach, to provide the ICRC Delegation in Lima with an evidence-based view of what has worked and what can be improved for the next strategy on prevention and influence. Good practices and lessons learned were identified to improve the design of future interventions, and a set of practical, forward-looking recommendations was drafted.

The objectives of this evaluation exercise were:

- To understand the relevance and effectiveness of the prevention and influence approach through the 3 Protection Results in the 6 Operational Priorities defined by the Lima Delegation, establishing the contributions to the current results.
- To identify how the prevention and influencing approach contributed to the ICRC's positioning in Peru. In addition, the Evaluation will draw on the findings to issue prospective recommendations to define the ICRC's forthcoming priorities in Peru and neighboring countries, considering the ICRC's positioning and mandate.
- To identify lessons learned that can be replicated and used for future preventive and influencing activities in Peru and neighboring countries.

Uses and Users of the Evaluation

The users of this evaluation include primarily the ICRC staff actively involved in the design and implementation of interventions in Peru, Bolivia, and Ecuador. According to the Terms of Reference (ToR), the list of users may include the central offices located in Switzerland, partner public institutions at the national and local levels, civil society organizations, as well as media and academic organizations that have acted as partners in the deployment of the organization's actions.

Scope

The scope of this evaluation focused on the period 2018-2022, although it also combined an analysis of the 2003-2022 period, and a geographic focus on the regional work of the Delegation in Peru, Bolivia, and Ecuador, with a particular focus on the VRAEM region.

The work in the region denoted certain challenges, most notably in the cases of Peru and Ecuador, as the countries have experienced a high degree of social and political polarization, augmenting their volatility during the timeframe. Additionally, the worsening socio-political crisis, instability, the increased criminality, and its humanitarian consequences in Ecuador, posed further challenges for the ICRC. The situation in Bolivia was stable, although some of the difficulties related faced by the ICRC's work in the country remained during the evaluation period. An interim government assumed office in 2019, following allegedly fraudulent presidential elections, entailing protest with humanitarian consequences.

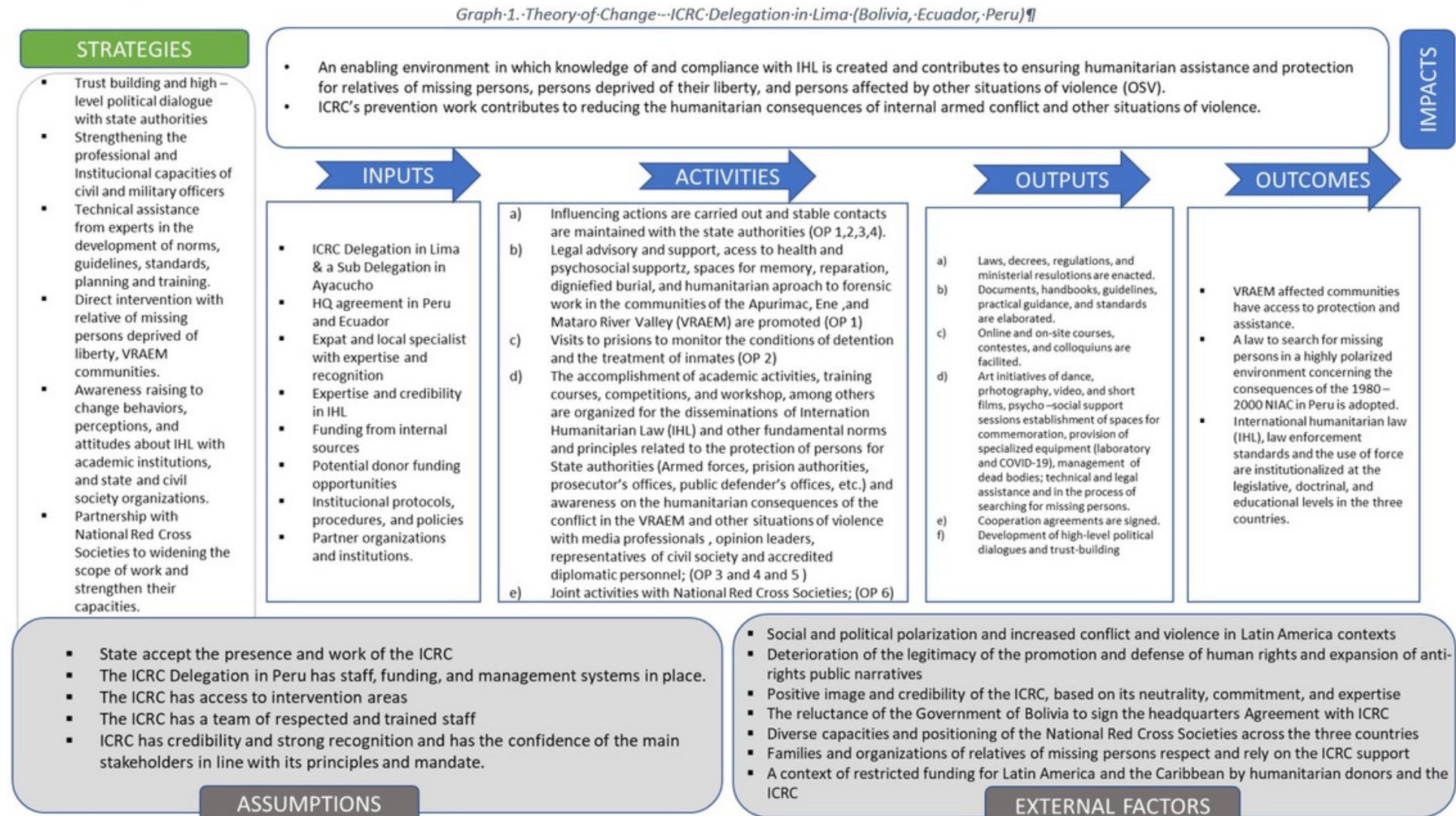
Approach and criteria

The adopted evaluation approach was summative and formative. It considered the OECD/DAC/NPTA evaluation criteria: **(i) relevance, (ii) effectiveness/contribution, (iii) efficiency, (iv) sustainability/connectivity, as well as lessons learned and added value** from ICRC's prevention and influencing work.

The evaluation team followed the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) guidance note for the best approach to inclusion issues, based on the analysis of power dynamics to "leave no one behind," given the marginalization of specific population groups according to gender, age, disability, and ethnicity. The analysis took into consideration the power dynamics and the relationship between the needs of these groups and the priorities established in the framework of the interventions designed by the ICRC. Finally, the evaluation addressed the ICRC's mission and mandate consistently with its respect for impartiality, neutrality, and independence.

Theory of Change

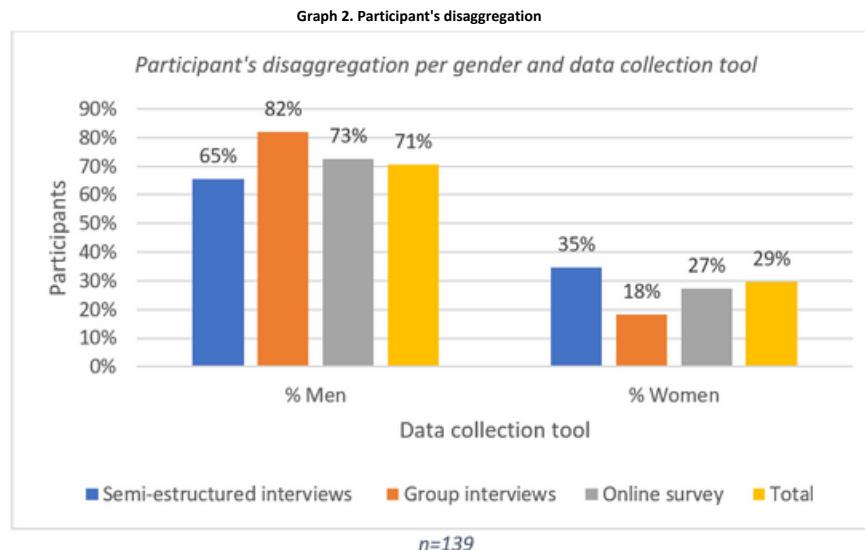
The ToC related to the ICRC intervention in Peru, Ecuador, and Bolivia primarily focuses on reducing humanitarian consequences of conflicts and other situations of violence by enhancing IHL and IHRL knowledge and implementation. Enacted through various interventions like support, training, and law implementation, the ICRC aims to address humanitarian needs stemming from the 1980-2000 conflict period and beyond, adapting to variations and shifts from 2018-2022. Strategic approaches include building trust with state authorities, strengthening institutional capacities, providing technical assistance, and conducting direct interventions with affected communities while utilizing their resources, such as knowledge, funds, standards and protocols. Though influenced by external factors such as social/political polarization and operational constraints in Bolivia, ICRC leverages its neutrality and commitment to navigate complex socio-political terrains. Three expected outcomes include VRAEM communities gaining access to protection and assistance, adopting a law for searching missing persons amidst a polarized environment, and institutionalizing IHL across legislative, doctrinal, and educational spectrums in the nations involved. The expected long-term impact is an environment conducive to IHL and IHRL knowledge and compliance, ultimately mitigating the humanitarian consequences of conflict and other situations of violence.



Methodology

The evaluation methodology envisaged using different qualitative and quantitative methods and counted the participation of 139 participants: 71% men and 29% women, per the following disaggregation.

The evaluation team thoroughly reviewed and analyzed 174 documents, while consulting various others more superficially. The process was conducted in two phases, one for the initial report and the other during the fieldwork/analysis.



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Cross-cutting Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations



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Conclusion 3

The ICRC Delegation efficiently carried out its prevention and influencing work despite facing severe budget constraints, resource decrease, the impact of COVID-19, limited personnel, and a restricted allocation proportion relative to the overall Delegation budget and expenditure. They achieved this by leveraging local expertise, gaining recognition, and maintaining a consistent presence. Furthermore, the Delegation accomplished activities without the need for external consultancies and conducted monitoring, evaluation, and reporting without dedicated focal points. These efforts led to significant outputs and tangible medium-term changes. However, it is recommended to improve the efficiency of specific time-consuming activities such as data collection, documentation, and analysis, as well as implementation strategies like face-to-face training for capacity building. Additionally, certain internal processes, including the number and quality of indicators and reporting, should be optimized. This will not only streamline operations but also provide strategic insights, allowing for a more focused approach on core priorities.

Recommendation 3

To explore adopting tailored institutional and individual capacity-building strategies through implementing mixed virtual and face-to-face training/conferences/workshops to reduce travel, per diem and accommodation costs.

Priority	Timeframe	Related to Findings	Addressed to the following institutions
Medium	2024-2025	7, 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICRC Delegation in Peru HQ

Recommendation 4

To cultivate robust national and regional alliances and partnerships with respected universities, academic institutions, and relevant entities, aiming to disseminate the enhancement of local capacities, instill a sense of ownership, and amplify the impact of existing initiatives.

Priority	Timeframe	Related to Findings	Addressed to the following institutions
High	2024-2025	7, 12, 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICRC Delegation in Peru HQ

Recommendation 5

To improve knowledge management and training systems through the integrated repository of reports, institutional databases, training participant's figures, evaluations, reports, and knowledge exchange outputs and measures.

Priority	Timeframe	Related to Findings	Addressed to the following institutions
High	2024-2025	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICRC Delegation in Peru OP Americas Unit of Evaluation and Monitoring (HQ)

Recommendation 7

Persist in and broaden the scope of prevention and influence work (Result 1) by leveraging the capacities instilled in civil society organizations. This expansion should unfold in collaboration with networks and groups extending beyond the confines of Lima and Ayacucho, thereby fortifying the impact and outreach of prevention and protection concerted efforts.

Priority	Timeframe	Related to Findings	Addressed to the following institutions
High	2024-2025	11, 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICRC Delegation in Peru Civil society organizations (ANFADET, ANFASET)

Recommendation 8

To enhance the adoption of mixed capacity building strategies in partnership with recognized Universities and focus the ICRC efforts on trust building and high-level dialogues on humanitarian issues.

Priority	Timeframe	Related to Findings	Addressed to the following institutions
High	2024-2025	14, 15, 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICRC Delegation in Peru

Conclusion 5

The added value of the ICRC's prevention and influence work is based on local technical expertise, international experience, long-term presence, neutrality, and credibility, which enable it to generate trust in the people and organizations with which it works. The ICRC brings unique value elements not provided by other agencies, linking prevention and protection. It can establish synergies between technical advice, legal support, training, and development of materials which, when added together, have a significant strategic value and can have a greater impact on changing the behavior of the actors involved. The evidence and findings above indicate that the ICRC can provide added value in those areas that form part of the "core" of its mandate and experience. This would support the idea of a necessary concentration and prioritization around them.

Conclusion 4

The ICRC's prevention and influence work has generated medium-term changes at the output and outcome levels. The challenge is to build a shared long-term definition of impact and to allow a reflection on emerging challenges in the regional context. ICRC has contributed to legal frameworks and public policy changes in searching for missing persons and accepting IHL, IHRL, and UoF standards in LEO. The organization has also consolidated a presence in the VRAEM region, building trust, institutional credibility, and bridges to pave the way for protection and assistance activities to affected communities. The institutional capacities of various State bodies have been strengthened, as well as the individual capacities of the armed forces, security forces, Ministries of Justice and Human Rights, Human Rights independent bodies (Ombudsman Office), and legal experts from various universities. The remaining challenges are related to the systematic evaluation, the State's ownership of tools and knowledge, their long-term commitment to budget allocation, and the definition of long-lasting public policies.

Recommendation 6

To improve multi-year strategic planning mechanisms, the definition, number and quality of outcome and impact indicators, and work on defining and measuring impact indicators.

Priority	Timeframe	Related to Findings	Addressed to the following institutions
Medium	2024-2025	9, 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICRC Delegation in Peru HQ

Recommendation 9

To continue encouraging the State's commitment and ownership of tools, processes, and learning for effective policymaking in the humanitarian field.

Priority	Timeframe	Related to Findings	Addressed to the following institutions
Medium	2024-2026	8, 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICRC Delegation in Peru

Recommendation 10 a

To encourage the adoption of international standards, practices and tools to ensure gender mainstreaming and or targeted prevention and influence work at the ICRC Regional Delegation in Lima, and to revise the use and application of existing gender markers.

Priority	Timeframe	Related to Findings	Addressed to the following institutions
High	2024-2027	1, 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICRC Delegation in Peru OP Americas

Recommendation 10 b

To enhance the effectiveness of the ICRC Regional Delegation prevention and influence work, through the adoption of a cross-cultural approach in their accountability practices towards affected populations in Ecuador and Bolivia, based on the rich experience in Peru.

Priority	Timeframe	Related to Findings	Addressed to the following institutions
High	2024-2027	1, 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICRC Delegation in Peru OP Americas

Recommendation 11

To implement and encourage new forms of collaboration with local institutional partners, including their commitment to resources. To broaden the scope of future alliances and partnerships by mapping strong public and private institutions with capacities or potential to complement the ICRC's prevention and influencing work.

Priority	Timeframe	Related to Findings	Addressed to the following institutions
High	2023-2025	18, 19, 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICRC Delegation in Peru

Lessons learned and Promising practices

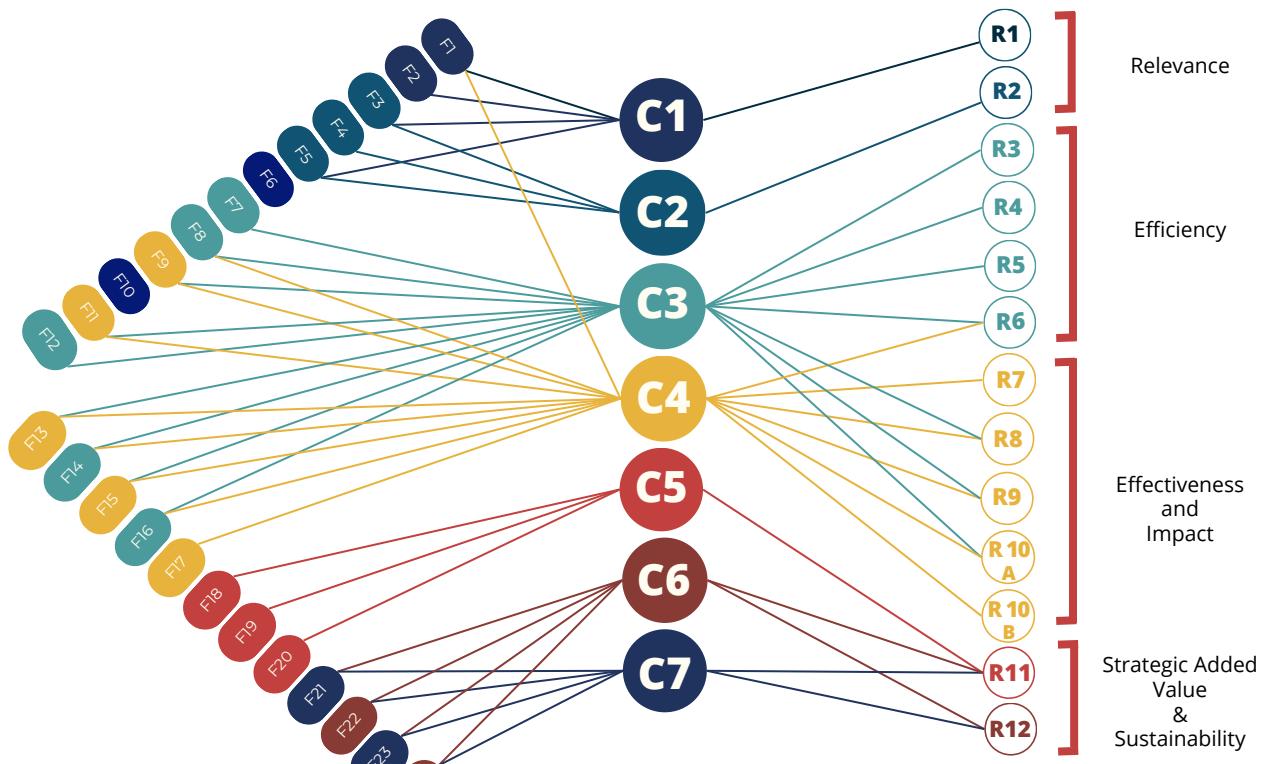
In the context of this evaluation, lessons learned provide feedback for decision-making, integration into planning processes, and improved design of future interventions and documentation. This set of lessons learned is based on the contributions of key informants from the individual and group interviews and the applied survey, and it is expected that ICRC Headquarters and Delegation can review them periodically to ensure their relevance to the changing context.

- I. **Continuity and a long-term vision are essential in developing prevention work**, as many high-level public officials currently working in senior ministerial areas can offer their support; they underwent training in the past and are now capable of establishing commitments. The sustained development of an institutional and personal relationship with different areas and state authorities is critical to prevention work.
- II. **The long-term vision also involves building and strengthening the capacities of the younger generations** and working with the sons and daughters of the founders of the organizations of relatives of missing persons in Peru. Several organizations that make up these networks are concerned about the effects of generational changes in the respective leaderships and need help participating in their organization. Reflecting on these renewal processes is strategically important, as is the approach to social networks and platforms and their use in campaigns.
- III. **The characteristics of the State's institutional design, precisely the greater or lesser fragmentation** and number of bodies with competence in external security and the maintenance of internal order with which to coordinate, are essential for consolidating the process of strengthening and appropriation of the results.
- IV. **Prevention interventions generally improve the ICRC's delivery of assistance** to the affected populations with whom it works.
- V. **The set up of institutional positioning to build an environment conducive to protection consists of holding meetings, convincing the actors, writing to them, and preparing arguments**. It generally remains invisible and remains unclear whether the focus should be on the means engaged, the result achieved, or the milestone reached. One of the key informants illustrated this point as follows: "...The Missing Persons Act meant a great joy, ...something very nice, and at the same time, it required many years of work. One must be aware of the time an activity takes to make daily progress toward the results. The coordination work with the different areas of the State, organizations, groups, and networks of civil society has been one of the keys to enacting the Law. When the efforts are unilateral, they don't work, or at least not with the same strength. Walking together has enabled us to achieve many things..."
- VI. **The cross-cutting nature of the ICRC work in Peru plays an important role, but it needs further work**. It does not flow on its own. As one of the interviews remarked during the evaluation process: "...it is the people who must promote it, as it allows us to overcome the "silos" that separate prevention from protection and, at the same time, to work towards achieving both institutional and contextual objectives.
- VII. **In contexts such as Peru's, investing in indirect resources, such as the local technical team, offers comparative advantages** since it is possible to promote interventions with a high-level team at affordable costs. Factors such as the professional capacity, creativity, and intelligence of the people who make up the work teams are precious elements. The ICRC Delegation in Peru has a staff of senior and junior experts, which contributes to strengthening strategies.
- VIII. **Advocacy and influence work is strategic**: it requires highly professionalized teams to be carried out with a vision far beyond assistance or the provision of funds for the development of initiatives. Based on the experience in other contexts, in Peru, the selection and monitoring of leading cases can operate as a thermometer of the structural problems the institutional framework will address later.
- IX. **The ICRC's technical expertise and neutrality in working with public authorities, organizations, networks, and civil society groups have been critical in Peru**. These factors permitted the establishment of dialogue mechanisms and ensured mutual respect. Without this support, the ICRC would have continued to be considered a partial organization and would not have achieved the results that it finally obtained.
- X. **The open dialogue and exchange of information within the Red Cross Movement**, more specifically between the ICRC and National Societies, facilitates access to affected communities.
- XI. **Transparency offers a fundamental basis for law enforcement actions** and ease the accountability before the Ombudsman's Office, to which the information is submitted (Peru).
- XII. **The ICRC technical assistance to develop norms and policies has yet to be part of a comprehensive and explicitly defined strategy**. For this reason, designing a strategy with defined and articulated components would allow for better follow-up and accountability.

Promising practices

- I. **The investment in legal practice clinics for the development of compatibility studies and voluntary reports**, in line with the experience of the ICRC in Ecuador, is helpful for both the State and the ICRC, as it allows focusing efforts and concentrating resources. The involvement of the National IHL Commission and authorities in these studies and reports deserves to be remarked.
- II. **The work carried out by the National IHL Commissions** in drafting pledges for the International Conference is highly remarkable as part of the work of the ICRC Delegation in Peru.
- III. **Support for IHL Competitions** at the international and regional levels consolidated a group of young and motivated experts committed to the ICRC mission.
- IV. **Coordination with the academic world** is one of the hallmarks of the ICRC's prevention work in Peru and Ecuador, which enables a broader scope to build and strengthening technical capacities.
- V. **The ICRC's work experience and liaison with UNESCO** on the emblem for the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict in Ecuador is a promising practice
- VI. **The #Reúne Communication Campaign** is a successful strategy which has been assessed very positively by the ICRC, civil society organizations, and various areas of the State. It is likely to be replicated by the State institutions in the construction of historical memory in Peru.

Cross-cutting Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations



Findings by criteria

• Relevance

F1. The ICRC's work in the region, focusing on prevention and influencing, has remained consistent in its priorities while also adapting to changes in the humanitarian context and needs.

F2. The six operational priorities (OPs) are relevant to the crisis in Peru, Ecuador, and Bolivia.

F3. The humanitarian consequences of Colombia's NIAC on Ecuador are not being addressed, nor are they being addressed from a preventive perspective.

F4. The six OPs are well integrated and comply with national and regional legal frameworks.

F5. The prevention and influence work has been highly relevant, despite the lack of a regional prevention strategy from the ICRC's Lima DR. Thus, there is a certain lack of knowledge about the specificity of the ICRC's prevention and influence work and its scope.

F6. While the ICRC's prevention and influence approach has been effective for certain marginalized groups, it has not adequately reached others.

• Efficiency

F7. From a comparative perspective, the ICRC's prevention approach for Peru, Ecuador, and Bolivia was efficient in its contribution to achieving protection outcomes. However, there is room for cost improvement in certain direct and indirect cost items to develop interventions.

F8. The ICRC Delegation in Peru has implemented its budgetary resources efficiently in the context of budgetary restrictions and has a strong, recognized, and highly trained local team. Nevertheless, there is room for improvement in the processes for implementing activities and for establishing external partnerships.

F9. Although the ICRC has been improving since 2017 its M&E systems, mechanisms, and tools for prevention and influence, weaknesses have been identified at the ICRC Regional Delegation in Lima in the unified data management, set-up of outcome indicators and the measurement of intervention impacts.

F10. The definition of roles and functions (JD) of the prevention and influence work varies across Delegations, and it is contextually adapted.

• Effectiveness and Impact

F11. The ICRC's prevention and influence work contributed to creating medium-term achievements. It relies on a long-term presence and a comprehensive and consolidated range of institutional relations, especially in Peru.

F12. The ICRC has succeeded in creating and strengthening the institutional capacities of state institutions mandated with the search for missing persons in Peru and the IHL Commissions in Peru and Ecuador.

F13. The ICRC has played a significant role in designing and enacting regulatory frameworks for the search for missing persons and the use of force. However, challenges persist in ensuring effective implementation by States through appropriate public policies and allocation of budget and staff.

F14. Over the course of this period, the ICRC has successfully enhanced the individual capacities of armed forces members, security personnel, jurists, and academics in Peru, Ecuador, and Bolivia. Nonetheless, in the medium term, generational change, budget constraints, and staff turnover pose ongoing challenges.

F15. The ICRC faced many challenges in its efforts to prevent and influence different operational priorities, such as: the volatile political and institutional context, limited funds, structural difficulties within states, and the coordination of actions within the broader International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

F16. The implementation of ICRC's prevention and advocacy approach has yielded tangible benefits for organizations, groups, and networks supporting the relatives of missing persons (OP 1) and for Peruvian society as a whole (OP 2). Additionally, the positive impact of raising awareness and influencing armed conflict and OSV (OP 3) has primarily been observed among personnel in various ranks of the armed forces and police forces in Peru, Ecuador, and, to a lesser extent, Bolivia.

F17. The ICRC's prevention and advocacy work in Peru, Ecuador, and Bolivia has not consistently integrated a gender and inclusion approach.

• Strategic Added Value

F18. The ICRC's work in prevention and influencing in the VRAEM is irreplaceable, invaluable, and enhances the protection of affected communities.

F19. Through the approval of a Law and other public policy measures, the ICRC's work in actions related to the dignity of missing persons and their families has provided differential elements of a humanitarian approach.

F20. The ICRC's technical rigor, credibility, and expertise have facilitated the institutionalization of IHL and other international standards and norms in the three countries, promoting their implementation and encompassing additional value-added elements.

• Sustainability

F21. Strengthening support to local partners has enabled a better response to the needs of affected populations. However, the capacity building of partners has been limited.

F22. While progress has been made in strengthening some partner institutions and their level of commitment, the sustainability and continuity of many prevention activities remain uncertain. Progress has not been made to enable all the partners to respond autonomously and to ensure that the changes can be maintained in the future.

F23. Institutions, primarily public entities, highly value and request direct dialogue with the ICRC on prevention-related issues. In most cases, the ICRC's direct involvement is irreplaceable in influencing actions.

F24. Partnerships with entities outside the RC Movement or public entities, except for missing persons, have been few and not significant.